

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

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TO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

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TOECO 3

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO THE HAGUE PARIS LONDON

BERN EC BRUSSELS OECD PARIS NOV 5 REPEATED TO YOU.

QUOTE:

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ENRG, BE

SUBJECT: PETROLEUM: BELGIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS SUPPLY NEGOTIATIONS
IATIONS

REF: BRUSSELS 6227

1. BELGIAN MINISTER FORAFFAIRS VAN ELSLADE AND MIN ECON
AFFAIRS CLAES HAVE AGREED THAT GOB WILL OPT FOR UNIFIED EUROPEAN
COMMUNITY APPROACH TO CURRENT PETROLEUM SUPPLY PROBLEM. ACCORD-
ING TO MINFORAFFAIRS OFFICIAL EC APPROACH IS NOW "FIRM POLICY".

2. GOB HAD BEEN TEMPTED BY POSSIBILITY OF CARRYING OIL PRODUCERS
FAVOR BY DISTANCING THEMSELVES FROM NETHERLANDS. AT LEAST ONE
BELGIAN MINISTER (PROBABLY MINECON AFFAIRS CLAES) PROPOSED POLICH
OF UNILATERAL APPROACH TO ARABS AND ATTEMPTED TO FLOAT THAT POLICH
BY MEANS OF SELEVITIVE LEAKS TO LOCAL PRESS. PRESS REPORTS OF SUCH
APPROACHES HAVE, HOWEVER, BEEN OFFICIALLY DENIED. BELGIAN
ATTITUDES HAVE BEEN INFLUENCED BY CONTINUING MISTRUST OF

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NETHERLANDS STEMMING FROM 1956 OIL-SHARING PROGRAM WHEN

DUTCH ALLEDGEDLY GUILTY OF MASSIVE MISREPRESENTATION OF
THEIR STOCKS.

3. INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO GOB IS THAT OIL PRODUCERS EMBARGO
AGAINST NETHERLANDS INCLUDES ALL SHIPMENTS TO ROTTERDAM RE-
GARDLESS OF ULTIMATE DESTINATION AND GOB IS ACTING ON THIS
ASSUMPTION. (OVER 50 PERCENT OF BELGIUM'S CRUDE IMPORTS TRANSIT
ROTTERDAM.)

4. DUTCH MEASURES TO LIMIT PETROLEUM CONSUMPTION RECEIVING
WIDESPREAD COVERAGE IN BELGIUM. RESPONSIBLE GOB OFFICIALS,
PARTICULARLY MINECONAFFAIRS CLAES, BEGINNING TO PUBLICLY DISCUSS
POSSIBLE NECESSITY TO IMPLEMENT VARIOUS FORMS OF RATIONING.
RETAIL PRICES INCREASE LIKELY SOON AND MINISTER CLAES THREATENED
TO REQUISITION ALL STOCKS IN COUNTRY IF THOSE HOLDING STOCKS (I.E.
LARGE PETROLEUM COMPANIES) ATTEMPT TO PROFIT FROM EXPECTED PRICE
INCREASE BY WITHHOLDING PRODUCT FROM SALE. STRAUSSZ-HUPE
UNQUOTE. RUSH

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